




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Record of Proceedings, 21 March 2017

MOTION

Queensland Labor Party, Mount Coot-tha Branch

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (6.10 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion as moved by my colleague the member for Hinchinbrook and at the same time condemn the Mount Coot-tha branch of the Queensland Labor Party for its statement against resource industry jobs for Central and North Queensland. Mr Deputy Speaker, if ever you needed evidence of the great divide that exists within the Labor Party in Queensland then you need look no further than the statement made by Michael Berkman from the Greens, a statement that makes clear that those opposite have a deep seated opposition to the resource sector in this state, a sector that contributed \$56 billion in 2015-16 to the Queensland economy.

When we talk about revenue opportunities for this state, there is no greater contributor than the resource sector, yet we continue to see those opposite, supported by their mates in the Greens, waging green warfare against our mining companies and industry bodies in the resource sector—a campaign that is putting at risk projects like the \$16 billion Adani Carmichael Mine project in Central Queensland, a project that has the potential to generate thousands of jobs and inject hundreds of millions of dollars into our economy. I note that the government is quick to put their hand out and accept the royalties generated from our mining companies—\$2.2 billion last year. Secretly they are plotting to get rid of the mining companies but at the same time putting their hand out for those royalties to help prop themselves up. It is nothing short of hypocritical.

The LNP's Royalties for Regions program in my region—Whitsunday and Mackay—has delivered projects such as the \$14 million Marian wastewater treatment plant, the \$9.3 million Bowen Developmental Road and the \$7.6 million Proserpine wastewater treatment plant. It clearly shows that the LNP are prepared to invest the royalties from the resource sector back into our rural and regional communities to deliver that critical infrastructure like water and wastewater plants, roads and bridges. You cannot have one message in Central and Northern Queensland and another message in the south-east corner of the state. Queenslanders might be many things but they can smell a hatchet job a mile off, and this position by those opposite stinks. It stinks because it is putting at risk the much needed jobs that our rural and regional communities are craving.

Mr Deputy Speaker, if you want to see what the downturn in the mining industry did to some of our communities, you need look no further than communities such as Bowen, Collinsville and Glenden. I was in Glenden two weeks ago. There are 250 vacant homes in Glenden. Shops have closed, services are drying up and there is an air of despair in that community that is absolutely heartbreaking. Just up the road at Collinsville we have business owners who have been hanging on by a thread, hoping and praying that the resource sector is turning around because they have nothing left. They have exhausted their savings, they have shot their overdraft to pieces and they are now living on hope.

If we are to give our business owners in these communities and our citizens hope, if we are to give those people some light at the end of the tunnel, then we need to develop our resource sector because they are sick and tired of the mixed messages that are coming out of the Palaszczuk Labor government. We need to be opening up more mines to capitalise on our vast mineral wealth because our miners do it better than anywhere else in the world. We should be building a coal-fired baseload power station in North Queensland—

Mr Costigan: Collinsville is the place.

Mr LAST: I take the interjection from my colleague the member for Whitsunday: Collinsville is the place—and, together with water infrastructure, move North Queensland ahead. They are the central planks in the development of North Queensland. We heard today that Queensland now has the highest unemployment rate in Australia, yet here we have a government rallying against the very industry which has the potential to deliver tens of thousands of jobs in Central and Northern Queensland.

The comments from the Mount Coot-tha branch of the Queensland Labor Party simply highlight what we on this side of the House have known for some time, and that is that this Labor government is no friend of the resource industry and any rhetoric to the contrary should be seen for what it is—a complete and utter sham. There is no question that the Labor Party in Queensland have an obligation to explain to Queenslanders what their position is regarding the resource sector and their support or lack thereof of mining projects like the Adani Carmichael Mine. If the Premier were fair dinkum about supporting our miners, she would stand up in this place tonight and renounce the call by the Greens to fight Adani.

(Time expired)